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Canadian Forestry Service-Maritimes
TECHNICAL NOTE

HIGHLIGHTS OF FOREST PEST CONDITIONS IN THE MARITIMES IN MID-JUNE 1987

The major forest pest conditions will again be reported periodically in 1987 for the information of our clients. The aim is to highlight the more significant problems when they occur and update the stories as they develop. In this report forest pest conditions are reported as they are known in mid-June 1987 in the Maritimes Region.

Development of both trees and pests is greatly influenced by weather which was variable in the early part of the season - as it always is. Northern New Brunswick got ahead of the rest of the region at the start but things are, for the most part, evening out.

Winter drying caused severe foliage discoloration of a wide variety of conifers throughout New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and much of Nova Scotia. Along highways the situation was compounded by salt spray. Roadside trees and hedges of pine, cedar, hemlock and spruce will lose much of their old foliage on the side facing the road as a result of damage in many areas.

Needle discoloration on black spruce. The needles on one-year old shoots of black spruce trees in plantations over large areas of northwestern New Brunswick turned yellowish and started shedding. This condition is a repeat of the situation observed last year which resulted in serious loss of foliage and reduced shoot growth. The pre-1985 foliage on the affected trees is healthy green. The foliage discoloration varies from all needles of all 1986 shoots affected to the less severe form where only a number of needles are discolored, although most of the shoots on the tree are affected. The discoloration is widespread but not uniform as the degree of discoloration and needle shedding varies among trees in the same area. Also, some patches are affected more than others. The cause of this condition, which appeared to have developed in a short time, is unknown and is under investigation as its effect on shoot growth is of considerable concern.

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INSECTS AND DISEASES ■

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Oak leafroller, a perennial problem in red oak stands in much of southwestern Nova Scotia, has been causing severe defoliation again this year. As a result of repeated heavy attack by this insect, and its "companion" the oak leaf shredder in previous years, many oak trees are in a very severe stage of deterioration. (In this situation it would be extremely difficult to detect a low level gypsy moth infestation).

Scleroderris canker, after years of relative quiet, appears to have exploded in some parts of New Brunswick and affected lower branches of jack pine especially in low-lying (frost pocket) areas. The disease was also found in a jack pine seed orchard.

Trembling aspen trees in many parts of New Brunswick, mostly in the western half, failed to produce foliage in the usual manner. Patches of trees had very small leaves, compared to foliage developed normally on unaffected trees. These patches appeared to be severely defoliated from a distance. On many of the affected trees there were some normally developed leaves that had a cleft along the main vein and the tip of the leaf was missing. The cause of this condition and the reasons for the patchy appearance is unknown. Late flushing trees are catching up to 'normal' trees and the differences are less obvious with the passing of time.

Pine leaf adelgid populations, very low for many years in the Region, are extremely high in areas of southwestern Nova Scotia. This pest, which produces cone-like galls on spruce trees and may cause shoot mortality on white pine, is currently leaving the spruce and adults are settling on the pine needles. In some areas it is difficult to find a white pine tree without adults sitting at the top of most needles.

Needle rust of jack pine, mainly in plantations, is very common and at some places severe again in New Brunswick and also found frequently in Nova Scotia. Some red pine plantations are also infected, although in most places the level of infection is much lower than on jack pine.

A variety of other pests are active in the Region, among them serpentine leafminer, European pine shoot moth, satin moth, ash rust, spruce budworm, cedar leaf miners, birch casebearer, birch leaf miner, red flag of balsam fir, spruce bud moths, leafrollers, uglynest caterpillar, etc.

Considerably down from previous years are larch casebearer and fall cankerworm.

-L.P. Magasi
Forest Insect and Disease Survey

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